

Statement on the Death of James Rhodes
March 4, 2001

America and Ohio lost a great man today, Governor Jim Rhodes. Laura and I share in this time of mourning with the people of Ohio. Jim was a dedicated, honorable public servant. His distinguished ca-

reer included representing Ohio and its people longer than any other Governor in the State's history. Our thoughts and prayers are with his daughters, Suzanne and Sharon, and his entire family.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Joe M. Allbaugh as Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency
March 5, 2001

Thank you all very much. It's an honor to be here to swear in my friend.

I first want to say it's a treat to see Mr. and Mrs. Allbaugh, from the great State of Oklahoma; and his brother; most importantly, Diane and Taylor. Thank you all for being here. Of course, you wouldn't have missed it. *[Laughter]*

When I was a Governor, Joe and I used to travel a lot together, and a lot of times people would come up and say, "Is he your bodyguard?" *[Laughter]* He wasn't, but I always felt a little safer when he was around. And that's the kind of man he is, and that's the kind of man I wanted to run FEMA.

When the worst happens anywhere in America, I can assure you folks will be confident when Joe Allbaugh arrives on the scene. He's not just a commanding presence or his stylish haircut—*[laughter]*—it's his confidence, his character, and his calm when trouble comes.

This isn't mere speculation. Last Wednesday at 10:54 in the morning, an earthquake rocked the State of Washington, injuring hundreds of people and causing billion dollars of property damage. By 11:30 that night, Joe Allbaugh was on the scene ready to assist people in need. That's the kind of man he is.

I couldn't have made it to Washington without him. And I can't tell you how honored I am that he has come to Washington to serve his country.

We never know where FEMA will be needed next, but we do know what makes this Agency so effective: more than 2,000 dedicated employees all across America; 4,000 standby employees, ready if needed; an ethic of professionalism; and a willingness to work with State and local officials to help people in need.

As Governor, I worked with FEMA officials. Joe and I have great respect for the outgoing Director, James Lee Witt, and for the Acting Director, John Magaw. A lot of change is needed in Washington, but in this Agency the standards are already high. Every year, many thousands of Americans live through floods and hurricanes and fires. They know from personal experience that FEMA is an example of the Federal Government at its best. And I'll tell you from personal experience that FEMA has a new Director that speaks to America at its best.

When he acts, he'll have my full confidence. When he speaks, it will inspire confidence in others. This Agency is in strong and steady hands. Joe will be at the White House many times in the next few years. In the nature of his job, they won't